

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A magnetic latch mechanism for removably latching a first member to a second member, comprising:

a magnet emitting a magnetic field mounted to the first member; and

a magnetically attractive catch plate mounted to the second member;

wherein, prior to moving one member in relation to the other member, the position of the catch plate is moved in relation to the position of the magnet from a position strongly engaged with the magnetic field to a position weakly engaged with the magnetic field.

2. The mechanism of **claim 1**, wherein the magnet is fixedly mounted to the first member and wherein the catch plate is movably mounted to the second member.

3. The mechanism of **claim 1**, further comprising at least one strike plate in intimate proximity to the magnet wherein the magnetic field is transmitted through the strike plate.

4. The mechanism of **claim 1**, wherein the magnet has an operative length dimension and wherein the position of the catch plate is moved in relation to the position of the magnet along the length dimension from a position strongly engaged with the magnetic field to a position weakly engaged with the magnetic field.

5. The mechanism of **claim 1**, wherein the catch plate comprises a rod.

6. The mechanism of **claim 5**, wherein the rod comprises:

a first section that strongly engages the magnetic field when located in a first position proximate to the magnet; and

a second section that weakly engages the magnetic field when moved to the first position.

7. The mechanism of **claim 6**, wherein the rod is straight.

8. The mechanism of **claim 6**, wherein the rod is curved.

9. The mechanism of **claim 6**, wherein the rod has a section comprised of strongly magnetically attractive material and a section comprised of material that is weakly influenced by a magnetic field.

10. The mechanism of **claim 6**, wherein the rod is slidably mounted.

11. The mechanism of **claim 6**, wherein the strongly engaged section of the rod has material positioned closer to the magnet than material in the weakly engaged section.

12. The mechanism of **claim 11**, wherein the weakly engaged section of the rod is comprised of a section with material removed from the rod.

13. The mechanism of **claim 1**, further comprising a biasing device for urging the latch mechanism into the position in which the magnetic field is strongly engaged.

14. The mechanism of **claim 13**, wherein the biasing device is a spring.

15. The mechanism of **claim 5**, further comprising a force exertion member fixed to the rod.

16. The mechanism of claim 15, wherein the force exertion member is a protrusion from the rod.

17. The mechanism of claim 15, further comprising a gripping fixture, fixedly located proximate to the force exertion member, for applying force between the gripping fixture and the force exertion member in order to move the force exertion member towards the gripping fixture.

18. A marking device, comprising:

an enclosure panel for covering a space;

a frame member proximate to an edge of the space;

a magnet emitting a magnetic field mounted to the frame member; and

a magnetically attractive catch plate mounted to the enclosure panel;

wherein, prior to moving the enclosure panel covering the space, the position of the catch plate is moved in relation to the position of the magnet from a position strongly engaged with the magnetic field to a position weakly engaged with the magnetic field.

19. The marking device of claim 18, wherein the catch plate comprises a rod slidably mounted to the enclosure panel.

20. The marking device of claim 19, wherein the rod comprises:

a first section that strongly engages the magnetic field when located in a first position proximate to the magnet; and

a second section that weakly engages the magnetic field when moved to the first position.

21. The marking device of claim 18, further comprising a biasing device for urging the catch plate towards the strongly engaged position.

22. The marking device of claim 18, wherein the device is an electrophotographic imaging device.

23²². The marking device of claim 18, further comprising a document feeder subsystem comprising the magnet and the catch plate.

24²³. The marking device of claim 22, wherein moving the enclosure panel exposes access to mechanisms in which substrates may be jammed.

25²⁴. A process for unlatching one member from a second member, comprising:

mounting a magnet emitting a magnetic field to the first member;

mounting a magnetically attractive catch plate to the second member;

prior to changing the position of one member in relation to the other, moving the position of the catch plate in relation to the position of the magnet from a position strongly engaged with the magnetic field to a position weakly engaged with the magnetic field; and

changing the position of the first member in relation to the second member.

26²⁵. The process of claim 24,

wherein the catch plate comprises a rod slidably mounted; and

further comprising sliding the rod from a position in which the rod is strongly engaged with the magnetic field to a position in which the rod is weakly engaged with the magnetic field.

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27 ~~26.~~ The process of **claim 25**, wherein:

the rod comprises a first section which strongly engages the magnetic field when located in a position proximate to the magnet and a second section that weakly engages the magnetic field when moved to a position proximate to the magnet; and

sliding the rod from a strongly engaged position to a weakly engaged position comprises sliding the rod from a position in which the first section is proximate to the magnet to position in which the second section is proximate to the magnet.

28 ~~27.~~ The process of **claim 25**, further comprising biasing the rod with a device that urges the catch plate towards the strongly engaged position.

29 ~~28.~~ The process of **claim 25**, further comprising exerting pressure against a force exertion member fixed to the rod in order to move the position of the catch plate in relation to the magnet.

30 ~~29.~~ The process of **claim 28**, wherein exerting further comprises applying force between the force exertion member and a gripping fixture fixedly located proximate to the force exertion member.